US History Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*When should the U.S. use military intervention?*

***Hotel Rwanda*: Viewing Guide**

**Background:** 22 years ago, over a span of just a few weeks, somewhere between 800,000-1,000,000 Rwandans were killed in an act of genocide. Here’s what you need to know as you watch the movie *Hotel Rwanda*, which was made in 2004.

**Hutus and Tutsis**: These are the two largest ethnic groups in Rwanda. During the 1800’s and early 1900’s, the German and Belgian colonial governments gave the Tutsis higher status and used them to rule over the rest of the Hutu population. They also issued Hutu and Tutsi identification cards, sharpening the divide between the two groups. After Rwanda gained independence, a Hutu-led government came to power. During the early 1990’s, a Tutsi-led rebel movement waged a low-level civil war against the Hutu government. Here are some basic differences between the groups:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Hutus** | **Tutsis** |
| * Majority of the population * Tend to be shorter and darker-skinned (but not always the case) * Historically had less power * Hutu-led government and military was in power in the early 1990’s * Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana died when his plane was shot down on April 6, 1994. | * Minority of the population * Tend to be taller and lighter-skinned (but not always the case) * Historically had more power * Rebel army was fighting for power in the early 1990’s * Called “cockroaches” by Hutu militants |

**Characters to know:**

**Paul Rusesabagina:** Paul is a real person, and this movie is based on a book that he wrote. He is Hutu, although he is not a part of the nationalist movement. His wife Tatiana and her family are Tutsi. Paul is the manager of the Hotel des Milles Collines, a Belgian-owned hotel where many foreign and wealthy guests stay. He uses his position at the hotel to gain favors from influential people in the government and military.

**Colonel Oliver**: He is the head of the United Nations Peacekeeper forces in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda. At the start of the movie, he had been working to get a peace treaty signed between the Hutu government and the Tutsi rebel army. Oliver is based on the real-life Canadian General Romeo Dallaire.

**General Augustin Bizimungo**: He is a real person. He was head of the Hutu-led Rwandan Armed Forces (the official military). Paul bribes the General with liquor to gain his favor. The military did not carry out all of the killing, but did little to stop the militia (unofficial army). General Bizimungo was convicted of war crimes and is serving a life sentence.

**Georges Rutaganda**: Another real person. In the movie, he owns a beverage distribution company and Paul buys from him for the hotel. Paul also gives him gifts like Cuban cigars. Rutaganda was a leader of the Hutu-power militia called the *Interahamwe*, and called for the extermination of all Tutsis and moderate Hutus in Rwanda. He was given a life sentence for crimes against humanity and died in prison in 2011.

US History Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*When should the U.S. use military intervention?*

***Hotel Rwanda*: Reflection Questions**

1. Could the Rwandan Genocide have been prevented? Explain.

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1. What responsibility do wealthy and powerful nations (like the U.S., Britain, or France) have to prevent or intervene in situations like Rwanda’s? Should there be any “red lines” that a country cannot cross without the world community stepping in?

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1. Think of this movie as an argument for humanitarian intervention. Do you think it made an effective case? Why/why not?

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